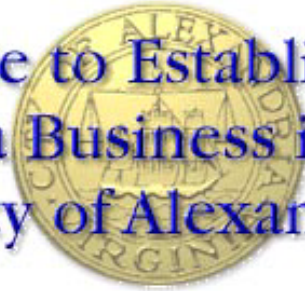


Guide to Establishing  
a Business in  
the City of Alexandria, Va.



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## **PREFACE**

The first edition of the *Alexandria Business Resource Directory - A Guide to Establishing a Business in the City of Alexandria, Virginia*, incorporates additional text and updates information provided in the *Guide to Establishing a Business in the City of Alexandria, VA*, which was first published in May 1997, under the joint sponsorship of the Alexandria Branch of the National Association for Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), the Alexandria Chamber of Commerce, the City of Alexandria, and the Alexandria Economic Development Partnership, Inc. (AEDP). This Directory remains a comprehensive guide to resources and services that are available to prospective business owners and existing businesses, which we hope will assist you in establishing and operating a successful business.

## **INTRODUCTION**

Welcome to the City of Alexandria, Virginia. We are pleased to have you as a part of our community and we are committed to helping your business prosper.

The *Alexandria Business Directory - A Guide to Establishing a Business in the City of Alexandria, VA* contains available information on establishing and operating a successful business. The Directory summarizes the major state and local tax, labor, occupational and legal requirements, and environmental regulations related to doing business in Virginia. It provides prospective business owners and operators with information on starting a small business, and includes step-by-step instructions on how to obtain a business license in the City of Alexandria. The Directory is also designed to identify local, regional, state and federal resources that can help you in various aspects of starting and operating your business. The enclosed information also contains sample copies of commonly required forms.

While every effort has been made to ensure that information in this Directory is current and accurate, those interested in starting a business should seek legal, accounting and other professional advice on matters pertaining to forming a business, and are urged to consult with the agencies listed in the Directory. Copies of the Directory are available from AEDP; Citizen Assistance, Alexandria City Hall, (703) 838-4800, or at <http://ci.alexandria.va.us/alexandria.html>.

The information contained in this Directory is the result of the individual and collaborative efforts of several City, State and Federal agencies and business organizations to provide advisory guidance to persons interested in operating a business. AEDP extends its thanks and appreciation to the agencies and organizations listed in this publication for their cooperation in developing the first edition of the *Alexandria Business Directory - A Guide to Establishing a Business in the City of Alexandria, Virginia*.

## KEY INFORMATION SOURCES

### City of Alexandria

Office of the Mayor	(703) 838-4500
Citizen Assistance	(703) 838-4800
City Council Office	(703) 838-4500
City Manager's Office	(703) 838-4300
General Information & Web Site	(703) 838-4000
TDD For Hearing Impaired	(703) 838-5056

### Telephone

### Getting Started

Business License	(703) 838-4680
Building and Code Inspection Services	(703) 838-4360
Certificate of Occupancy	(703) 838-4360
Child Care Approval/Licensure	(703) 838-0750
Incorporation	(804) 371-9733
Planning & Zoning	(703) 838-4666
Trade Name & Partnership	(703) 838-4044

### Services

Fire Marshall	(703) 838-4360
Police Non-Emergency	(703) 838-4444
Refuse Collection	(703) 751-5130
Street Lights	(703) 838-4721
Taxpayers Assistance	(703) 838-4570
Transit Services	(703) 838-3800
Water & Sewer Problems	(703) 838-4488

### Taxes

Business License Tax	(703) 838-4680
Business Personal Property	(703) 838-4680
IRS TeleTax	(800) 829-4477
Personal Property (Boat Vehicle)	(703) 838-4560
Real Estate Assessments	(703) 838-4646
Real Estate Tax Payments	(703) 838-4777
State Income Tax	(703) 838-4570
Virginia Department of Taxation	(703) 359-6715

### Business Assistance Resources

Alexandria Chamber of Commerce	(703) 549-1000
Alexandria Convention and Visitors Association	(703) 838-4200
Alexandria Economic Development Partnership	(703) 739-3820
Alexandria Small Business Development Center	(703) 299-9146
Business Assistance Loan Program - Office	



of Housing, City of Alexandria	(703) 838-4622
Child Care Assistance	(703) 838-0886
Consumer Affairs	(703) 838-4350
ECDC Enterprise Development Group	(703) 685-0510
Enterprise Zone	(703) 739-3820
Northern Virginia Urban League	(703) 836-2858
Police Crime Resistance Unit	(703) 838-4520
Procurement Technical Assistance Program	(703) 277-7755
Purchasing Agent, City of Alexandria	(703) 838-4944
SBA - Washington District Office	(202) 606-4000
Internal Revenue Service	(800) 829-1040
Virginia Employment Commission	(703) 813-1399
Virginia Small Business Financing Authority	(804) 371-8254
Virginia's Center for Innovative Technology	(703) 689-3000

### **Local Business Support**

Alexandria Business and Professional Women	(703) 824-1378
The Eisenhower Partnership	(703) 684-5124
King Street Metro Enterprise Team	(703) 548-2878
Northern Virginia Community College	(703) 845-6212
Old Town Business Association	(703) 684-0580
Potomac West Business Association	(703) 299-9588

### **Other Important Offices**

Alexandria Lawyer Referral Service	(703) 548-1105
Alexandria Library	(703) 838-4555
Legal Services of Northern Virginia - Alexandria Office	(703) 684-5566
Northern Virginia Cigarette Tax Board	(703) 591-9222
NAACP/ Alexandria Branch	(703) 370-9429
Virginia Dept. of Alcoholic Beverage Control	(703) 518-8090
Virginia Dept. of Minority Business Enterprise	(804) 223-0671

## ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA

### Points of Interest

	Distance in Miles
Washington, DC	7.0 miles
Tysons Corner, VA	19.5 miles
Baltimore, MD	46.0 miles
Richmond, VA	104.0 miles
Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport	3.5 miles
Washington Dulles International Airport	33.0 miles
Baltimore/Washington International Airport	38.5 miles

### History

Located across the Potomac River from Washington DC, the City of Alexandria, Virginia was established in 1749 as a seaport for the nearby plantations. The City was surveyed with the assistance of young George Washington. In the 18<sup>th</sup> century, Alexandria flourished as a port, and in the 19<sup>th</sup> century became an important railroad center. By the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, the City grew into a manufacturing and commercial center. During the 1930's and 40's, Alexandria became a bedroom community for commuters working in Washington. Following the Second World War, Alexandria continued to grow with a revival of the colonial portion of the City where offices and housing replaced industrial uses. Today, Alexandria continues to flourish as an international business and technology center within the region.

### The Land & Climate

Total Acreage	9,400 acres
Square Mile Land Area	15.7 miles
Topography	Rolling Hills
Elevations	280' max. height, 3' min. height
Drainage System (Major Rivers)	Potomac River
Annual Average Precipitation	38.63"
Annual Average Snowfall	18.2"
Annual Average Temperature	57.6 (degrees Fh)
January Average Temperature	35.7 (degrees Fh)
July Average Temperature	79.0 (degrees Fh)

### Population

1990	111,183
1998	119,500*
2000	120,000

\*estimated

## Census Survey Snapshot

Alexandria is.....

- C 9<sup>th</sup> in the nation in per capita income
- C 7<sup>th</sup> in the nation in percent of population 25 and older with a college degree
- C 2<sup>nd</sup> in the nation in the percent of citizens employed in Executive, Administrative & Managerial positions
- C Triple-A bond rated by Wall Street's major rating agencies

## Utilities

Electricity	Virginia Power
Natural Gas	Washington Gas
Water	Virginia American Water Company
Telephone	Verizon, Comcast
Fiber	Verizon, Cavalier, Comcast, MCI WorldComm
Sewer	Alexandria Sanitation Authority
Solid Waste Disposal	City of Alexandria (residential) and private contractors (commercial and industrial)

## Transportation

**Roads** - Alexandria is virtually minutes away to anywhere in the metropolitan Washington, DC area via the Capital Beltway (I-495), Interstates 95, 66 and 395. The City is also served by U.S. Route 1 and State Routes 7 and 236.

**Mass Transit** - DASH is Alexandria's bus service; METRO Bus, provides bus service to other local jurisdictions; METRO Rail subway system serves commuters to Washington, DC and other jurisdictions from 4 stations in Alexandria; Virginia Railway Express (VRE) provides service to Washington DC and other area jurisdictions.

**Railroads** - Passenger service is provided by AMTRAK and the Virginia Railway Express. Freight service is provided by CSX and Norfolk-Southern.

**Air** - Domestic and international service is provided by 3 major airports: Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport, just 5 minutes from downtown Alexandria; Washington Dulles International Airport, located 33 miles from the City of Alexandria also provides air freight service; and Baltimore Washington International Airport located 38.5 miles from downtown Alexandria.

## Hotels & Community Facilities

23 Hotels with 3,928 Rooms  
4 Public Libraries  
929 Acres of Local Park & Open Space  
8 Fire Stations

## Medical Facilities

Alexandria Hospital, Alexandria - 368 beds

Arlington Hospital, Arlington - 350 beds

Northern Virginia Community Hospital, Arlington - 200 beds

Fairfax Hospital, Fairfax - 656 beds

Mount Vernon Hospital, Fairfax - 235 beds

## Education

### Public Schools (1998 - 1999)

Level	Number	Enrollment	Pupil/Teacher Ratio
K-5, Elementary	12	5,300	20
6 -8, Middle School	2	2,276	21
9 -12, High School	2	2,500	23

### Colleges & Universities in and near Alexandria

Alexandria Research Institute of Virginia Polytechnic Institute & State University . . . .	Alexandria
George Washington University Graduate Education Center . . . . .	Alexandria
Northern Virginia Community College - Alexandria . . . . .	Alexandria
Regent University . . . . .	Alexandria
Strayer University . . . . .	Alexandria
Virginia Theological Seminary . . . . .	Alexandria
Virginia Tech Washington- Alexandria Architecture Consortium . . . . .	Alexandria
Virginia Commonwealth University, School of Social Work . . . . .	Arlington, 8.5 miles
George Mason University . . . . .	Fairfax, 17.5 miles
Marymount University . . . . .	Arlington, 11 miles
Virginia Polytechnic Institute & State University/Northern VA Center . . . . .	Falls Church, 10 miles
University of Virginia, Northern Virginia Center . . . . .	Falls Church, 10.0 miles
American University . . . . .	Washington, DC 11.5 miles
Catholic University of America . . . . .	Washington, DC 11.5 miles
Georgetown University . . . . .	Washington, DC 9 miles
Howard University . . . . .	Washington, DC 9 miles
University of the District of Columbia . . . . .	Washington, DC 11 miles
University of Maryland . . . . .	College Park, Maryland 16.0 miles

## Local Economy

Alexandria's economy is dominated by its service sector, employing more than 39,420 people. Engineering, management and business services are important parts of this sector. Additionally, Alexandria maintains an identity as an important business location. More than 400 technology-oriented companies and over 300 associations call Alexandria home. As an incentive to attract technology companies, Alexandria offers an exemption from gross receipts tax to companies involved in research and development. Alexandria ranks 4<sup>th</sup> in the nation, behind Washington, DC, New York, and Chicago, in the number of associations headquartered in the City. More than 9,000 people are employed by associations located in Alexandria.

## Financial Institutions

There are 13 banks with 39 branches in Alexandria. Deposits range from \$100,000 to \$1 billion.

## Government Services

The City of Alexandria operates under a Mayor/Council/City Manager form of government.

**Local Police** 406      **Local Fireman** 267

## ZIP CODES

**The following zip codes are located in the City of Alexandria:**

22206, 22301, 22302, 22304, 22305, 22314, 22313 and 22320 (post office boxes only)

**Only the following addresses in zip code 22206 are in Alexandria, the remaining addresses are located in Arlington:**

Street Name	Range	Numbers	Street Name	Range	Numbers
S. 28 <sup>th</sup> Street	4900-4916	Odd/Even	S. Columbus Street	2800-2998	Even
S. 29 <sup>th</sup> Street	4900-4999	Odd/Even	S. Dinwiddie Street	2900-2999	Odd/Even
S. 30 <sup>th</sup> Street	4901-4911	Odd			

**Enterprise Zone Zip Codes:** 22301 and 22302

**All addresses in zip code 22302 are in Alexandria EXCEPT the following, which are located in Fairfax County:**

Street Name	Range	Numbers	Street Name	Range	Numbers
Condit Court	4900-4908	Odd/Even	Leesburg Pike	5151-5150	Even
Forest Drive	3527-3612	Odd/Even	Skyline Village Court	5101-5119	Odd/Even
Lee Court	3530-3538	Odd/Even	S. 14 <sup>th</sup> Street	3601-3619	Odd/Even
Leesburg Court	3501-3537	Odd/Even	S. George Mason Drive	3532-3619	Odd/Even

**All addresses in zip code 22304 are in Alexandria EXCEPT the following, which are located in Fairfax County:**

Street Name	Range	Numbers	Street Name	Range	Numbers
Bedlington Terrace	5190-5708	Odd/Even	Cottingham Place	5191-5209	Odd/Even
Brampton Court	6351-6378	Odd/Even	Farrington Avenue	5916-6100	Odd/Even
Chaucer Lane	6260-6317	Odd/Even	Manchester Way	6300-6336	Odd/Even
Chaucer View Circle	6269-6335	Odd/Even	Stultz Road	5124-5216	Even

**Zip Codes 22311 and 22312 are not easily split between Alexandria and Fairfax County.**

**The following zip codes use the Alexandria name in their mailing addresses, but are completely located in Fairfax County:** 22303, 22306, 22307, 22308, 22309, 22310 and 22315

**The following Alexandria Streets continue into Fairfax County:**

Armistead St.	Beckinridge Pl	Conduit Ct.	Leesburg Ct.	Rosser St.	Stevenson Ave.
Atkinson Pl.	Chamblis St.	Cottingham	Leesburg Pke.	Seminary Rd.	Stultz Rd.
Beauregard St.	Chaucer La.	Farrington Ave.	Lincolnia Rd.	Skyline Village Ct.	Tracy St.
Bedlington Ter.	Chaucer View Cir.	Forest Dr.	Manchester Way	S. 14 <sup>th</sup> St.	
Brampton Court	Colfax Dr.	Lee Ct.	Quantrell Ave.	S. George Mason Dr.	

**The following Alexandria streets continue into Arlington County:**

S. 28 <sup>th</sup> St.	S. 29 <sup>th</sup> St.	S. 30 <sup>th</sup> St.	S. Columbus St.	S. Dinwiddie St.
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## **ALEXANDRIA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIP, INC.**

The Alexandria Economic Development Partnership, Inc. (AEDP) is a public/private partnership between the City of Alexandria and the business community and serves as a focal point for economic development and commercial real estate information in Alexandria. Over the last several years, AEDP's efforts have been successful in establishing Alexandria as a headquarters for national trade associations and as a location for innovative and exciting technology firms - an important part of the Northern Virginia economy.

Alexandria's commercial market offers products suitable to many different needs. The variety of office and retail product is unmatched in the region. The affordable costs of space and Alexandria's corporate tax rates make the City extremely competitive.

Alexandria offers several incentives for firms. The only state-designated Enterprise Zone in Northern Virginia, located in the Potomac West area of the City, offers tax credits for job creation and capital investment. R&D firms located anywhere in Alexandria can have a portion of their gross receipts tax exempted. The Alexandria Micro Loan Program provides loans to small businesses in the City of Alexandria that do not yet qualify for conventional loans. Non-profit organizations can access low cost industrial development bonds for new construction, refinancing or equipment purchases. Additionally, Alexandria offers rapid review processing for tenant build-out and provides the most accelerated development review process in the region.

AEDP is committed to working with those in the commercial real estate field and the business community in general to continue to grow and improve Alexandria's economy.

For assistance regarding existing and proposed real estate, economic and demographic statistics, and for general business assistance, please contact:

Alexandria Economic Development Partnership, Inc.  
1055 North Fairfax Street  
Suite 204  
Alexandria, Virginia 22314  
Telephone: (703) 739-3820  
Fax: (703) 739-1384  
Email: [alexecon@erols.com](mailto:alexecon@erols.com)  
[www.alexecon.org](http://www.alexecon.org)

## **BUSINESS ESTABLISHMENT PROCESS IN ALEXANDRIA**

The following are guidelines to establishing a new business in Alexandria, and a brief description of agencies you may be required to contact before opening a new business.

### **Step 1 Determine Your Business Entity Type**

To begin any type of new business, you must first decide how you want the business structured. The decision on how to structure a business varies for each owner. The most common forms of business entities are listed below.

#### **Sole Proprietorship**

A sole proprietorship is an unincorporated business that is owned and operated by one person. This person receives all the profits and is personally liable for all the losses.

#### **General Partnership**

A general partnership is a relationship existing between two or more persons who join together to carry on a trade or business. Each partner contributes money, property, labor and/or skills, and agrees to share in the profits or losses of the business.

#### **Limited Partnership**

General partners retain control over the management of the partnership and are liable for all debts. Limited partners invest money or property in the business and are entitled to share in the profits. Generally, a limited partnership is formed to obtain additional funds. The limited partners' liability is limited to the extent of their investment.

A limited partnership created under the laws of another state or country is called a foreign limited partnership. It must register with the State Corporation Commission before it transacts business in Virginia.

#### **Limited Liability Partnership**

A limited liability partnership is a special status that can be registered for under a general partnership or a limited partnership. Partners are not individually liable for, directly or indirectly, claims and debts of the partnership as a whole or any individual partner or employee. However, a partner is still liable for claims and debts as a result of his/her own actions. A limited liability partnership must carry a minimum of \$500,000 in liability insurance.

#### **Limited Liability Company**

A limited liability company is an unincorporated business association of two or more members who own membership interest on their capital contributions. This type of business is intended to be taxed as a partnership while limiting the personal liability of its owners.

## **Corporation**

A corporation is an entity with a legal existence apart from its owners. Corporations must comply with federal laws and with laws in each state where business is conducted. Corporations are classified as stock or non-stock and domestic or foreign. Every corporation must first register with the State Corporation Commission before beginning its operations in Virginia. A **Subchapter S (or “S” Corporation)** is a special form of a regular corporation. It is incorporated as a regular corporation, but requests special permission from the Internal Revenue Service to be taxed as a partnership.

### **Step 2 Register Your Business**

#### **Trade, Fictitious, or Assumed Business Name**

If business is conducted in Alexandria under a trade name or an assumed business name, you must register with the Clerk of the Circuit Court before transacting business in Virginia. (A trade or assumed name is the use of any name other than your own name for business purposes.) The registration fee is \$10.00. If the business is a partnership, the registration fee is \$10.00 for the first two partners and \$1.00 for each additional partner. In addition, if the entity is a limited partnership, a limited liability company, or a corporation, you must obtain a copy of each fictitious name certificate, attested by the Clerk of the Circuit Court, which must be filed with the State Corporation Commission. The filing fee is \$10.00.

#### **Sole Proprietorship**

You do not need to file with the State Corporation Commission or with the Clerk of the Circuit Court, if you do not conduct business under a trade, fictitious, or assumed name.

#### **General Partnership**

Complete the Statement of Registration as a Domestic Limited Liability Partnership or Statement of Registration as a Foreign Limited Liability Partnership, if you are a Foreign Limited Liability Partnership and file it with the State Corporation Commission. The filing fee is \$25.00.

#### **Limited Partnership and Limited Liability Partnership**

Complete the Certificate of Limited Partnership Form, or complete the Application For Registration of Foreign Limited Partnership Form, if you are a Foreign Limited Partnership, and file with the State Corporation Commission. The filing fee is \$100.

#### **Limited Liability Company**

Complete the Articles of Organization, or complete the Application For Registration of a Foreign Limited Liability Company, if you are a Foreign Limited Liability Company, and file with the State Corporation Commission. The filing fee is \$100.

#### **Corporation**

Complete the Articles of Incorporation, or the Application for a Certificate of Authority to transact business in Virginia, if you are a Foreign Corporation, and file with the State Corporation Commission. The filing fee is \$25.00, plus a charter fee based on the number of shares. All entities



doing business in Virginia must register the business. Corporations, limited partnerships, and limited liability companies should register with the State Corporation Commission. General partnerships and trade names must register with the Clerk of the Circuit Court. You must also file the Charter fee based on the authority shares of common stock. The Charter fees are as follows: 1,000,000 or fewer authorized shares - \$50.00 for each 25,000 shares or fraction thereof; more than 1,000,000 shares - \$2,500.

**Contact:** All forms required by the State Corporation Commission can be downloaded from the Internet at [www.state.va.us/sc/division/clk/corp.htm](http://www.state.va.us/sc/division/clk/corp.htm). For additional information about business registration, please contact the *State Corporation Commission at (804) 371-9733* or the *Clerk of the Circuit Court at (703) 838- 4060*. For the addresses of the State Corporation Commission and the Clerk of the Circuit Court, see appendix.

### **Contractor Registration**

Contractors must register their businesses both with the State and the City. For registration information, contact the State Board for Contractors and the City of Alexandria Code Enforcement Bureau.

**Contact:** For more information about contractor registration, please contact *State Board for Contractors, (804) 367-8511; Code Enforcement Bureau, (703) 838-4360*. For the addresses of the State Board for Contractors and the Code Enforcement Bureau, see the appendix.

## **Step 3 Apply For A Business License**

Businesses, professionals, and occupations that meet all requirements are eligible to obtain business licenses upon application and payment of the license tax. Every person beginning a business is required to make an estimate of the amount of gross receipts they expect to receive by the end of the current license year. The first step in applying for a business license is to obtain and complete the Business License Application Form and file with the City of Alexandria Business Tax Branch. This information is then used by the Business Tax Branch to complete the business license application.

All contractors are required to obtain a business license before doing business in Alexandria. To solicit, bid on, or undertake a job, contractors must possess a Class A, B, or C contractors' license issued by the State Board for Contractors, listed above. Un-licensed contractors and contractors that possess a Class B or C license must obtain a City of Alexandria Home Improvement Contractor's License before soliciting or performing work on any residential property. Any contractor having a home office in Virginia and doing less than \$25,000 in work annually in Alexandria, may use a valid business license from another jurisdiction upon approval of the Business Tax Branch.

**Contact:** For additional information about obtaining a business license in Alexandria, please call the *Business Tax Branch at (703) 838-4680*. See the appendix for the address of the Business Tax Branch.

## Step 4 Obtain Zoning Approval

All businesses in Alexandria must obtain zoning approval before conducting business. The City of Alexandria Zoning Ordinance regulates the location, type and size of businesses allowed to operate within the City. The ordinance controls the uses, size and height of buildings and parking requirements. Each of the City's commercial, office and industrial zones has a list of permitted uses. Some of these uses may be permitted only with a Special Use Permit.

### Home-based Businesses

A limited number of home occupations are permitted to be conducted as home-based businesses in residential zones subject to stringent conditions and stipulations. Please check with the Zoning Compliance Division at the address shown below for a detailed listing of regulations affecting home occupations before you make a decision to operate a business in your home.

Applications for Zoning Approval can be obtained from the Business Tax Branch, and should be completed and submitted to the City's Department of Planning and Zoning.

**Contact:** For additional information, please contact the *Alexandria Department of Planning and Zoning* at (703) 838-4666. See the appendix for the address.

## Step 5 Ensure Compliance Building Code Regulations

### Certificate of Occupancy

Before opening for business, a Certificate of Occupancy is required in accordance with Section 118 of the Uniform Statewide Building Code. A Certificate of Occupancy is required for:

- New construction;
- Change of use group in an existing building (for example, from retail to office);
- Change of use within a use group in an existing building (e.g., switching from a beauty salon use to a travel agency);
- Major renovation within the same use group and having the same use; or
- Requests made by the property owner.

The Business Tax Branch will route new business license applicants to the Code Enforcement Bureau to determine if a Certificate of Occupancy and fire prevention permits are needed. The minimum fee for a Certificate of Occupancy is \$100 and the maximum is \$500. It is advisable to file and pay for a Certificate of Occupancy at the beginning of the permit review process so as to expedite the inspection process.

An inspection of the premises may be required by inspectors from Code Enforcement, Planning and Zoning, Transportation and Environmental Services, and the Health Department. Inspection requests are coordinated among several agencies and usually take 3-5 days to complete. It is recommended that the Code Enforcement Bureau be contacted approximately two weeks prior to a scheduled opening

to determine the progress of the project, and to ensure that inspections are scheduled.

### **Construction Permits**

All new construction, alterations and tenant improvements involving building, electrical, plumbing, mechanical and fire protection work require permits. To obtain a permit, an application and four sets of well prepared, scaled drawings must be submitted to the Code Enforcement Bureau. Plans for new construction are reviewed only after the site plan process is complete. The proposed work must be reviewed and approved by Planning and Zoning, Transportation and Environmental Services, and Code Enforcement which must issue permits for each category of work to be undertaken, before work may begin. Depending on the type of work, it may also require the Health Department's approval. Plans for new construction are reviewed only after the site plan process is complete.

Construction permits are issued to property owners, licensed contractors, lessees, architects or engineers. Contractors must possess a state license or an Alexandria business license, or be registered as a reciprocity contractor with the City Business Tax Branch. For plumbing, electrical and mechanical trade work, the master tradesman must sign the permit application. A permit becomes invalid if work is not begun within six months of issuance or if the permit remains dormant for six months. Inspections are the only way to validate ongoing work. It is the permit holder's responsibility to request inspections in accordance with the Uniform Statewide Building Code Enforcement. The Bureau of Code Enforcement and the Department of Transportation and Environmental Services may conduct unscheduled, on-site inspection while work is in progress. A Certificate of Occupancy can only be issued after completion of all construction and trade work, and final inspections are requested and approved.

### **One-Stop Shop**

The City also offers a "One-Stop Shop" review process where representatives from Planning and Zoning, Transportation and Environmental Services, and Code Enforcement meet on Wednesdays, from 8:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m., by appointment, to expedite building permit approvals for commercial tenant improvements. Only certain use groups and tenant sizes are eligible for "One-Stop Shop" review.

**Contact:** Please contact the *Code Enforcement Bureau at (703) 838-4360* and the *Alexandria Department of Transportation and Environmental Services Construction & Inspection Division at (703) 838-4324* for more information on obtaining a construction permit, trade permit and/or Certificate of Occupancy. See the appendix for the addresses. You may also call (703) 838-4900 - the 24-hour "ACCESS"- line for informational recordings.